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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1773
INFO RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 0457
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA 0088
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0134
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE 0075
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0134
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0440

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000625

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2018

TAGS: PREL EAID NL SO SU XW ZI

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/AFRICA: DUTCH VIEWS ON SUDAN,
ZIMBABWE, AND THE HORN OF AFRICA.

REF: A. THE HAGUE 587

1B. BRUSSEL...

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1B. BRUSSELS 1098

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Andrew Mann, Reasons 1.5 (b
,d)

11. (U) SUMMARY: Wepke Kingma, MFA Director of the Sub-Saharan Africa Department recently discussed the Dutch position on Sudan, Zimbabwe, and the Horn of Africa. END SUMMARY.

Sudan

12. (C) Regarding the recent ICC indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, the Dutch have expressed public support for the ICC, but Kingma believes the timing for the indictment is poor. Though Kingma made it clear the Dutch would not publicly state this, he believes that pursuing the indictment for Bashir will prove costly to any negotiations and likely backfire. Plans for a Dutch contribution to UNAMID will be ""pushed back"" because a group of Dutch legislators returned from the region ""foaming at the mouth"" with concerns about the security situation.

Zimbabwe

13. (C) The Dutch government continues to be an engaged and

concerned observer of Zimbabwe, though Kingma admits that much of the public ignores the issue. Kingma noted that it was possible Mugabe would attempt to buy the support of rival political parties in an attempt to create a coalition government that will be acceptable to the West but which Mugabe would still control. Although, in Kingma's view, the rest of the world may be underestimating the South Africans in the Zimbabwe negotiations, he feels Mugabe is probably just ""buying time"" with the negotiations process. The Dutch continue to look at what sanctions will truly hurt the Mugabe regime.

¶4. (C) In a July 17 discussion between Poloffs and Melle Leemstra, MFA desk officer for Zimbabwe, and Wouter Plomp, head of the middle and southern Africa division, the Dutch reported the EU's sanction plan (reftel B). The United Kingdom will push for further measures, including an investment ban, to be enacted in September. However, the remaining foreign investments in Zimbabwe are British and American, and pursuing an investment ban is difficult. The Dutch wonder, ""Is the U.S. working with non-EUR states on sanctions, or contemplating action by the Human Rights Council?"" The Dutch urge creativity in pursuing additional measures. For example, governments could use ""moral suasion"" rather than an investment ban, with press statements such as ""it's inconceivable to do business in Zimbabwe."" Tesco, UK has stopped buying from Zimbabwe, and Shell is also considering a sale of assets in Zimbabwe.

¶5. (C) Plomp wondered if the negative votes from Russia, China and South Africa on the UN sanctions were a surprise to the United States. The Dutch noted the need for South Africa to find a ""graceful way out"" for Mugabe, so perhaps it would be better to ease the pressure on South Africa. Minister for Development Cooperation Bert Koenders noted (in a conversation with A/S Frazier) that there should be some cooperation between the negotiations in South Africa and the brandishing of international sanctions. The Dutch concede that it will be difficult to coordinate the bureaucratic and political sides on a timeline.

¶6. (C) Plomp took note of the need to consider the eventual reconstruction of Zimbabwe, with recent South African Development Community estimates running around two to three billion dollars. The Dutch maintain that it will be key for ""northern"" countries to coordinate.

Horn of Africa

¶7. (C) Somali PM Nur Hassan Hussein visited the Netherlands July 10. According to Kingma, the Dutch told him they were ready to give aid to Somalia, especially for local police forces. The Netherlands is actively working towards a solution with neighboring countries to address the lawlessness. The latest report by the International Crisis Group was a disappointment as it just ""pulls out the latest toolbox"" with proposals such as naming a special envoy, but does not address the ""underlying issues."""

¶8. (C) Though an outspoken critic of the regime, the Dutch have been directly speaking with Ethiopia this year since it is willing to engage on critical issues such as Ogaden and Somalia. Eritrea, however, will not discuss Somalia with the Dutch. Norway's FM Store told Dutch FM Verhagen that the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia was a key to resolving the Somalia problem. Kingma thinks that is ""bullshit,"" but the FM asked for a paper on the issue.\

¶9. (C) Comment: Kingma's frank talk did not provide any surprises but reflected his four years, experience leading Dutch Africa policy. It was also emblematic of the Dutch penchant for blunt remarks to allies. For example, Kingma suggested the way to deal with Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony would be for the United States to ""put a price on"" his head and encourage local figures in the Congo to ""take care"" of him. End Comment.